Bassano (Alta)
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Survey of BASSANO

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Prepared By

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BRANCH
DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY & DEVELOPMENT
Government of the Province of Alberta

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Town of Bassano

(Revised October 1963)

1. LOCATION

Section 17-21-18-W4 in Census Division No. 2. This location is 88 miles southeast of Calgary on Trans Canada Highway No. 1, 95 miles from Medicine Hat and 116 miles northeast of Lethbridge via Highway No. 36. This location is on the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, with branch lines to Irricana, Drumheller and Empress.

2. ALTITUDE

2,599 feet Latitude - 50/47 Longitude - 112/28

3. TEMPERATURE

Average summer - 63.93° F.

Average winter - 11.97° F.

Average annual - 39.5° F.

4. RAINFALL

Average annual rainfall - 9.94 inches.

Average annual snowfall - 33.4 inches.

Average annual precipitation - 13.28 inches.

(Note - Sections 3 and 4 taken from the weather station at Brooks)

5. GEOLOGY

The Fox Hill formation forms the bedrock at Bassano. It is a variable series of brown, grey and green sandstones and sandy shales. The formation contains oyster beds and bits of fossilized wood. It is of Upper Cretaceous Age. There are large deposits of sand and gravel (that requires no cleaning for construction use) to be found in the immediate area.

6. SOIL

Bassano lies in the brown soil zone.

Vegetation

Short prairie grass.

Soil Profile

In the normal profile the surface horizon is about 5 inches deep and brown in color. The sub-soil is commonly brownish in color and the lime horizon is found at depths averaging 16 inches below the surface. The parent

material is found at depths of 14 to 24 inches. In other zones this horizon occurs at greater depths.

Fertility

Moisture is the principal limiting factor in crop production. Soils in this zone are relatively low in nitrogen and phosphorus and under irrigation or in a wet year respond to fertilizers supplying these elements.

Land Use

Only the most favorable soil types can be considered arable. Most of the area is desirable for ranching. Where farmed, wheat is the principal crop grown. Cropping practices must provide for moisture conservation and control of soil drifting. The long frost-free period makes this zone a desirable area for the development of irrigation. Bassano marks the beginning of the Eastern Irrigation District, and to the east, under irrigation, market garden produce flourishes.

7. HISTORY

Bassano was named after the Marquis de Bassano, a native of Bassano, Italy, who was a Canadian Pacifiic Railway shareholder. His wife was a native of Quebec province.

Bassano is an important point in the history of the province. On September 22, 1877, when Treaty No. 7 was signed by Chief Crowfoot of the Blackfoot Indians, the Honourable David Laird, Lieutenant Governor of the North West Territories, and Colonel Macleod of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, were among the notables present for this important occasion, which took place 14 miles west of the town. A cairn was erected a few years ago on the exact spot where the signing took place.

The Canadian Pacific Railway completed laying steel to Bassano in 1884, and with the arrival of the railroad came new settlers. In 1909 drilling for gas and oil began and natural gas in quantity was found in 1911. In 1909 the Canadian Pacific Railway started construction of the large irrigation dam on the Bow River, three miles south of the town. In 1912 the dam was completed and irrigation water was supplied to the farmers. Water and power were installed in the town in 1913. The Presbyterian Church was the first to be built. In 1914 the first hospital in the district was built, with Dr. C. E. Harris in charge. One of the early settlers was Richard Bedford Bennett, who later became the Right Honourable R. B. Bennett, K.C., LL.B., Prime Minister of Canada. At one time he owned a hotel in Bassano.

8. LIVING CONDITIONS

Bassano lies between the Red Deer and Bow Rivers. Streets are wide, gravelled and well-treed. The town is in the path of the "Chinook," a dry westerly wind from the Pacific which has been known to raise the temperature as much as 50° in a few hours.

The irrigation dam provides good fishing, as well as boating and swimming. For the hunter there are ducks, geese, upland game birds and pheasants in the area.

There are approximately 315 homes in the town, with the average rent for a five-room modern house $65.00 a month. About 90% of the homes are owner occupied. Building permits for the last five years have totalled approximately $1,000,000.

9. ADMINISTRATION

The town is governed by a mayor elected for a two year term and six councillors, two elected each year for a three year term. The secretary-treasurer administers the affairs of the town in accordance with the policies set by the council.

10. LAWS AND REGULATIONS

The town hires one police constable.

Police Magistrate.

Building Regulations - All new buildings, repairs to buildings or removal of buildings must be approved by council after which a permit is issued.

Electrical installations must comply with the Alberta Electrical Protection Act.

Sanitary installations must comply with the Provincial Health Regulations.

Gas installations must comply with the Alberta Gas Protection Act.

Streets in the residential area are wide and tree-shaded

11. FIRE PROTECTION

The fire brigade consists of a fire chief and 18 firemen.

Equipment - One 1956 500 GPM pumper with 600 gallon tank, one 1942 500 GPM pumper; 1,900 feet of 2½ inch hose; 1,200 feet of 1½ inch hose; extension ladder; roof ladders, crowbars, axes, fog nozzles, coats, boots, etc.

Water Supply - Water is obtained from the Bow River and is pumped into a 200,000 gallon elevated tower. There are 33 fire hydrants conveniently located throughout the town.

12. TAX STRUCTURE

	1963 Net Assessment
Land, 100% of value	$ 90,760
Improvements, 100% of fair value	712,630
Business	191,002
Power	18,574
Pipelines	6,943
Total Assessment	$1,019,909

	Municipal	School	Hospital	Total
Mill Rate	28	39	3	70 Mills

13. AREAS

Area of town - 750 acres.

Streets, roads and lanes - 170 acres.

Parks and playgrounds - 9 acres.

Miles of roads, streets and lanes:

	Asphalt	Gravel	Imp. Earth	Total
Provincial Main				
Streets and roads		19	2	21
Lanes			11	11
			Total Miles	32

There are approximately four miles of concrete sidewalks.

14. SEWER AND WATER MAIN MILEAGE

Storm sewers - .10 miles.

Sanitary sewers - 5 miles.

Water mains - 8 miles.

15. POWER

Three phase 60 cycle power is supplied under a franchise by Calgary Power Limited.

Domestic Rate

Available only for cooking, lighting, heating, domestic power and ordinary uses in private homes and individual apartments, used exclusively for residential purposes.

First 20 KWH or less used per month - $2.60 gross minimum subject to 30c prompt payment discount making $2.30 net minimum.

All additional KWH used per month - 1½c net per KWH.

Discount - The discount for prompt payment is the difference between the gross and net minimum charge. The above are monthly rates but meters normally are read, and bills rendered every two months or three months in the case of rural service.

Commercial Rates

Demand charge per KVA $1.00.

Available where other rates listed do not apply.

First 100 KWH used per month - per KVA of demand - 5c per KWH.

Excess KWH used per month - per KVA of demand - 1½c per KWH.

"Demand" is the maximum 30 minute rate of power delivery, expressed in Kilowatt amperes (KVA) during the previous 12 months; and not less than 1 KVA. Alternatively the demand may, at the company's option, be measured and billed in Kilowatts or may be estimated by testing or from the consumer's connected load.

"Minimum Charge" is the demand charge but not less than domestic service charge for the same community.

The above are net rates applicable to accounts paid within 10 days of the date rendered. Net bills are increased by 5% and not less than 30c, after the discount date. The rates are quoted on a monthly basis but meters normally are read and bills rendered every two months; or three months in the case of rural services.

Power Rates

Demand charge per KVA $1.00.

First 50 KWH per month enery consumption (per KVA of installation) 5c per KWH.

Next 50 KWH used per month energy consumption (per KVA installation) 3⅓c per KWH.

Excess KWH used per month energy consumption (per KVA installation) 1⅔c per KWH.

Discount - 10% - 10 days based on the dollars only.

Minimum charge - $3.00.

"KVA of Installation": one motor H.P. is taken as one KVA. The company may at its option, estimate the demand or may install a thermal

demand meter. When a demand meter is installed the billing demand is the maximum 30 minute KVA demand in the preceding 12 months.

The rates are quoted on a monthly basis but meters normally are read and bills rendered every two month; or three months in the case of rural services.

16. WATER

Water is obtained from the Bow River and is electrically pumped into a 200,000 gallon elevated tower and then into the water mains.

Rates

Domestic - Flat rate - $5.00 per month including sewer charges.

Commercial - $6.00 to $30.00 including sewer charges.

Water Analysis	Parts per Million
Total solids	256
Ignition Loss	130
Hardness	170
Sulphates	17
Chlorides	6
Alkalinity	150
Nature of Alkalinity - Bicarbonate of Lime and Magnesium	
Nitrite	nil
Nitrates	nil
Iron	.4
Fluorine	.3

Remarks - Water chemically suitable after iron has been settled out.

17. GAS

Natural gas is supplied under a franchise by Canadian Western Natural Gas Company.

Rate No. 1 - General

Available to all customers.

First 2 MCF or less used per month - $3.00.

All additional MCF used per month - 75c per MCF.

Minimum monthly charge - $3.00.

When accounts are not paid on or before the due date, the charge per MCF other than the first 2 MCF shall be increased by 4c and the gross rate so arrived at shall apply.

Rate No. 2 - Optional

Available to all customers whose annual consumption is more than 574 MCF.

Fixed charge - $12.50 per month.

Plus commodity charge - 52c per MCF.

Minimum monthly charge - $12.50.

This rate is available only on annual contract which shall continue from year to year, thereafter until either party shall give to the other party, at least 30 days prior to the expiration of any such year a written notice of desire to terminate same, whereupon at the expiration of such year it shall cease and determine. When accounts are not paid on or before the due date, the charge per MCF shall be increased by 3c and the gross rate so arrived at shall apply.

18. L. P. GAS

Heat value - 2,521 b.t.u. per cu. ft. at 60° F.

100 lb. cylinders - $6.00.

Bulk - 16c per gallon.

Storage capacity - 1144 gallons.

19. DIESEL FUEL

Heat value - 135,000 to 140,000 b.t.u. per gallon at 60° F.

Winter grade - 18.1c per gallon.

Summer grade - 17.1c per gallon.

Storage capacity - 14,000 gallons.

20. COAL

Coal is secured from Drumheller and a local mine eight miles from the town.

	Lump	Egg	Nut	Slack
Rates per ton delivered	$16.40	$15.40	$10.70	$6.10

Local - $7.00 per ton mine run.

21. RESOURCES

Wheat and coarse grains, vegetables (beans, peas, corn, carrots, potatoes), fruit (crabappples, cherries, strawberries, raspberries, Manitoba plum), horses, cattle, sheep, hogs, grass seed, dairy products, poultry products, honey, gas, sand and gravel.

22. GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND SERVICES

Federal - Post Office, R.C.M.P. Detachment, Department of National Defence (Armouries).

Provincial - Alberta Government Telephones, Provincial Treasury Branch, Liquor Vendor, Medicine Hat Health Unit.

Municipal - Town Hall housing (Council Chamber, Secretary-Treasurer, Public Works Foreman), Police Department, Fire Department.

23. HEALTH SERVICES

The Bassano Municipal Hospital has 36 beds and 6 bassinets. The staff consists of a matron, assistant matron, eight graduate nurses and four nurses' aides, and six nurses' aide trainees.

Public Ward Rates - Residents - $1.60.

Non residents - $11.50.

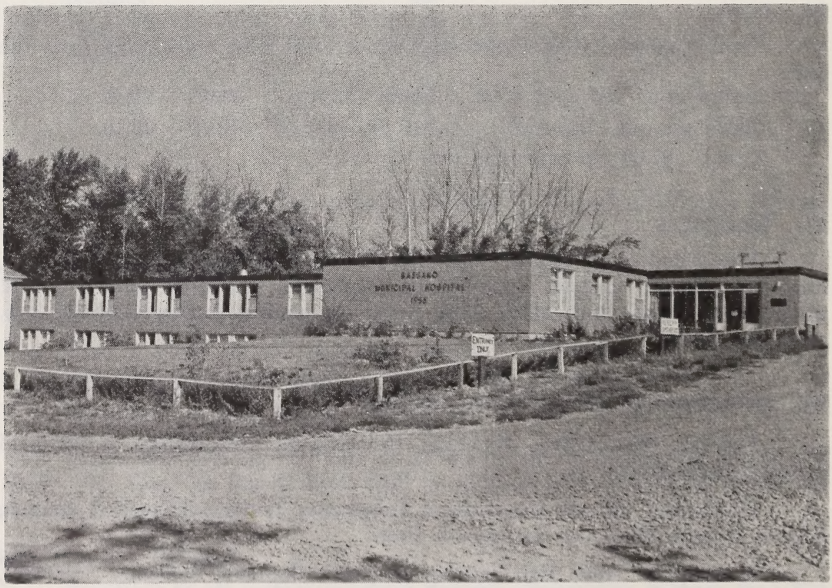
The Medicine Hat Health Unit visits monthly providing the following services. Immunization of all persons residing in the Health Unit district; Pre-natal and post-natal care; inspection of water and food supplies as well as sanitary inspection.

Other Health Facilities - 3 doctors, 1 dentist, 2 veterinarians, 1 drug store.

24. PROFESSIONAL AND SKILLED PERSONAL SERVICES

(Excluding Health Services)

Type of Service	No. of Establishments
Accountant	calling weekly
Barbers	2
Beauty Parlor	2
Shoe repair	1



Residents are proud of the new Bassano Municipal Hospital

25. TRANSPORTATION

Canadian Pacific Railway - main line Montreal to Vancouver via Bassano.

Canadian Pacific Railway - branch line Calgary to Moose Jaw via Bassano.

Canadian Pacific Railway - branch line Calgary to Drumheller via Bassano.

Greyhound Bus Line - Three daily east and west.

Local trucks - daily service to Calgary and Medicine Hat.

26. NEWSPAPERS

Bassano Times (weekly).

27. COMMUNICATIONS

Canadian Pacific Telegraph and Telecommunication, Alberta Government Telephones, Post Office.

Nearest Radio Stations - Drumheller (CJDV), Calgary (CFAC, CFCN, CHFM-FM, CKXL), Lethbridge (CJOC, CHEC).

Nearest TV Stations - Calgary (CFCN, CHCT), Lethbridge (CJLH).

28. FINANCIAL FACILITIES

Royal Bank of Canada, Provincial Treasury Branch Agency.

29. HOTELS

	No. of Rooms	Rate	Licensed
Imperial Hotel	28	$2.50 up	yes

30. MOTELS

	No. of Units	Grade	Rate
Upland Motel	9	2 star	$4.00 up
Tourist Camps	2		$4.00 up

Alberta Government Park - 2 miles east on Highway No. 1.

31. CHURCHES

Presbyterian, Anglican, Roman Catholic, Evangelical Free Church.

32. LODGES AND SERVICE CLUBS

Masonic, Knights of Columbus, Royal Arch, Eastern Star, Kinsmen, Board of Trade, Canadian Legion.

33. SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Home and School Association, Fish and Game Association, Red Cross Society, Agricultural Society, Bow Valley Feeders' Association, Bassano Chariot Club, Board of Industrial Development, Rodeo Association, FUA, FWUA, AARN.

34. EDUCATION

The town schools are a unit of the County of Newell No. 4. Grades 1 to 12 are taught along with the following optional subjects: French, Art, Music, Shop and Commercial Drama.

The school population is made up as follows:

	Grades	No. of Teachers	No. of Pupils
Elementary	1 - 6	6	187
Junior High	7 - 9	3	56
High	10 - 12	4	62

35. THEATRES AND HALLS

	Capacity	Stage	Piano
Armouries	100	no	no
Capital Theatre	220	yes	yes
Bud's Banquet Room	140	no	yes
Curling Rink	400	no	no
Masonic Hall	200	yes	yes
Community Hall	500	yes	yes
Christian Education Bldg.	200	yes	yes

36. CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

There is no public library in the town. The school library is open to the public during school hours.

Other Activities - Local five piece orchestra, Bassano Sketch Club, Lapidary Club, Drama, Art and Music at school.

37. YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Boys - Scouts, Cubs, Calf Club, 4 H Club, Jet Cadets.

Girls - C.G.I.T., Brownies, Calf Club, 4 H Club.

38. SPORTS

Baseball, hockey, softball, curling, badminton, swimming, boating, football, golf, water skiing, trap shooting.

Facilities - Open air skating and hockey rink, covered curling rink, two sheets artificial ice, swimming pool, 9 hole golf course (sand greens), baseball diamond, playgrounds, school grounds, race track and rodeo grounds, Little Dam park, wading pool.

39. FAIRS

Bassano Stampede and Rodeo; Gymkana; Track Meet.

40. HISTORIC SITES

Cairn marking the signing of Treaty No. 7 at the eastern end of the Blackfoot Reservation. The Bassano Dam, constructed 1911 to 1913, largest gravity type dam in the Western Hemisphere, permits irrigation of 195,000 acres.

41. CO-OPERATIVES

Alberta Wheat Pool, Eastern Irrigation District, Bow Valley Feeders' Association, Bassano Savings and Credit Union, Central Alberta Dairy Pool, Alberta Rabbit Breeders Co-op Ltd., X L Feed and Supply, Rural Electrification Association, Mutual Telephone Association.

42. INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS

Type of Business or Industry	No. of Establishments	Producer or Manufacturer	Wholesale	Retail
Accountant	1	calling	wkly.	
Banks	2	—	—	—
Banquet Halls	4	—	—	—
Barbers	2	—	—	—
Beauty Parlor	1	—	—	—
Body Shop	1	1	—	1
Blacksmith	2	2	—	2
Building Contractors	3	—	—	—
Building Supplies	1	—	1	1
Butchers	1	—	—	1
Cake Board Manufacturer	1	1	1	—
Cartage Delivery	2	—	—	—
Clothing (men's)	1	—	—	1
Clothing (women's)	See	general	stores	
Coal Dealer	1	—	1	1
Coin Laundry	1	—	—	—
Concrete Transit Mix	1	1	1	1
Creamery	1	1	1	1
Dentist	1	—	—	—
Doctors	3	—	—	—
Dressmaker	1	1	—	1
Drug Store	1	—	—	1
Electrical Appliances	2	—	—	2
Electrical Contractor	1	—	—	—
Feed Mill	1	1	1	1
Freezer Service	1	—	—	1
Funeral Parlor	1	—	—	—
Foundry and Machine Shop	1	1	1	1
Garages and Service Stations	6	—	—	6
General Stores	2	—	—	2
Grain Elevators	2	cap. 216,000 bushels		
Hardware	2	—	—	2
Honey Packers	1	1	1	1
Hotels	1	—	—	—
Implements (farm)	2	—	—	2
Insurance & Real Estate	2	—	—	—
Lumber Yards	1	—	1	1
Market Garden	1	—	1	1
Milk Delivery	1	—	1	1
Motel	1	—	—	—
Oil Distributor	2	—	2	—
Painter and Decorator	4	—	—	—
Plumbers	1	—	—	—
Pool Room	1	—	—	—
Printers and Publishers	1	1	1	1
Propane Gas Distributors	1	—	1	1
Radio and TV Repairs	3	—	—	—
Restaurants	4	—	—	—
Sand and Gravel	2	—	—	—
Scrap Metal Dealer	1	—	—	—
Seed Cleaning	1	1	1	—
Sewing Machine Repairs	1	—	—	1
Shoe Repairs	1	—	—	1
Sporting Goods	1	—	—	1
Theatre	1	—	—	—
Transports	3	—	—	—
Variety Store	1	—	—	1
Veterinarians	1	—	—	—
Welding and Machine Shop	1	1	—	1
Woodworking	1	1	1	1

44. SITES

Industrial and residential sites can be purchased from the town at reasonable rates. 99% of available sites are owned by the town.

Residential lots are serviced with all utilities. Lots of 50' to 75' by 150' deep can be purchased at a nominal price. C.M.H.C. will loan money for house building.

Commercial lots are zoned and surveyed. Choice locations are available in the business section, serviced with all utilities and reasonably priced.

Industrial lots are well drained and nearly level. The sub-soil is sandy and the water table is at least 20' (ideal for slab floors and foundations with the lack of frost heave). Land is zoned and surveyed for immediate title at nominal cost per acre or lot. Industrial lots are on or near C.P.R. trackage, or near the Trans Canada Highway. Lots can be serviced with utilities as required. 170 acres are available as industrial acreage, the largest site being 40 acres.

45. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Bassano is the centre of an area devoted to varied types of farming. Toward the west and north wheat farming, associated with cattle raising, predominates. In 1960 the principal sources of farm cash income were: grain 76 per cent, cattle 16 per cent; hogs contributed only 3.6 per cent. Towards

This is one of the four largest honey plants in Canada, located at Bassano

the east, however, irrigation waters are available and consequently the agriculture is much more diversified. One third of farm income came from grain sales, nearly one-half from livestock and the remainder from hay, seeds, etc. A mixed pattern of dry land and irrigation farming results in different types and sizes of farms in the district. However, a high degree of mechanization is evident. There are 1.5 tractors and one truck per farm. Over 75% of the farms are electrified.

The town is the home of the Bassano Honey Packers. With 24,600 square feet of floor space, and 12 employees, it is one of the four largest plants in Canada. 110 suppliers from Alberta and Saskatchewan market four million pounds of honey throughout the western provinces.

Bassano has a unique industry. The Bassano Cakeboard Works. More than 120,000 foil wrapped cakeboards are distributed from Toronto to Vancouver in one year.

The Alberta Rabbit Breeders Co-op Limited is the only rabbit processing plant on the prairies. It has a capacity of 1000 rabbits per week. Two employees butcher, cut, wrap and freeze the needs of the Calgary market. The few suppliers are the limiting factor on the size of the trading area.

The XL Feed and Supply Limited is a seed cleaning and treating plant. This modern, all steel plant moves the grain by air pressure; both suction and blowing. Its products are shipped over Southern Alberta though the principal trading area is within a 50 mile radius. Volume of business amounts to 370,200 bushels per year.

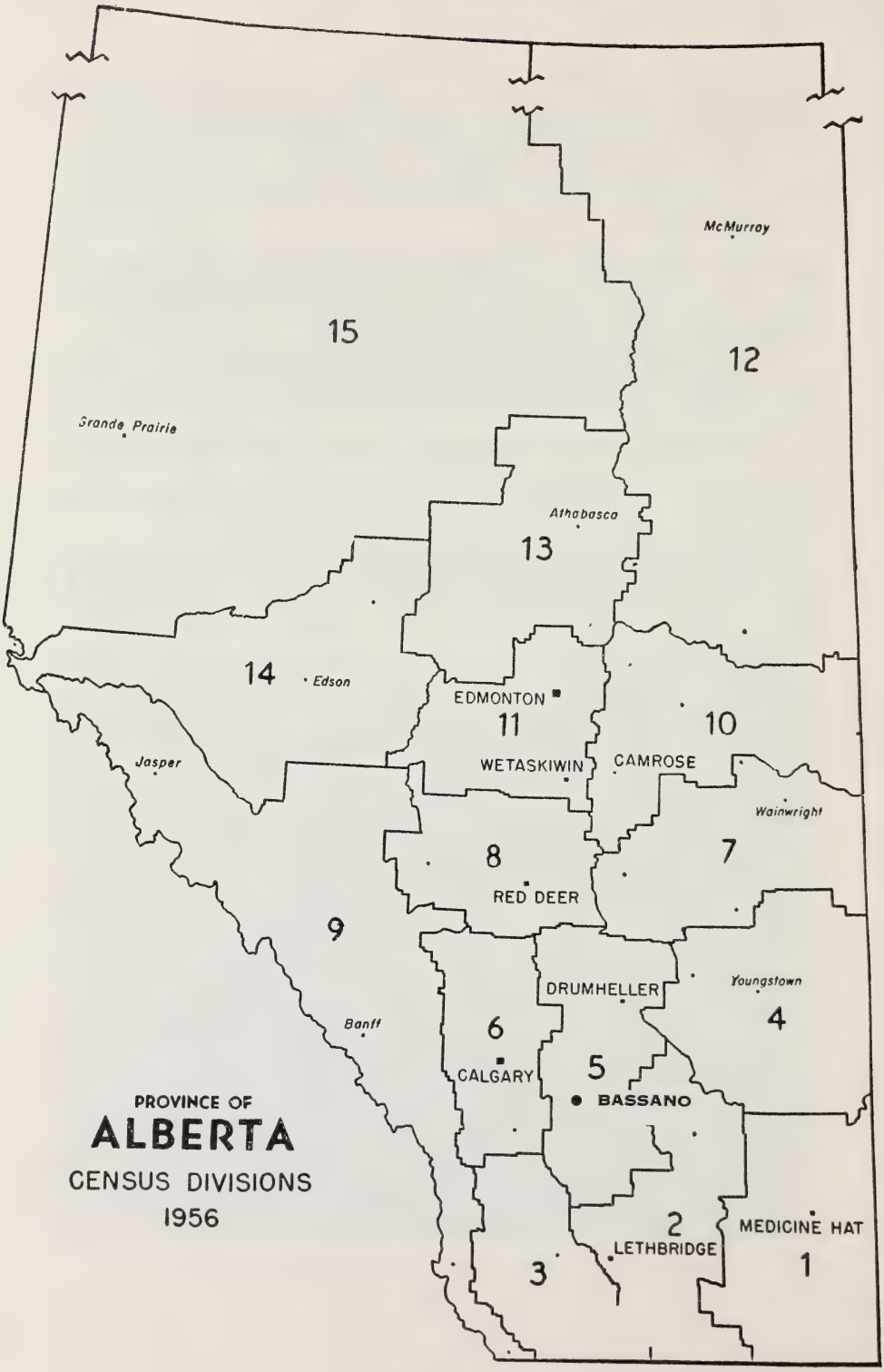
46. TRADING AREA

North 28 miles; West 22 miles; South 8 miles; East 14 miles.

47. POPULATION

Trading area population, 1961 Dominion Census - 3,466.

Town population, 1961 Dominion Census - 815.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RED DEER
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DRUMHELLER
Youngstown
Banff
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CALGARY
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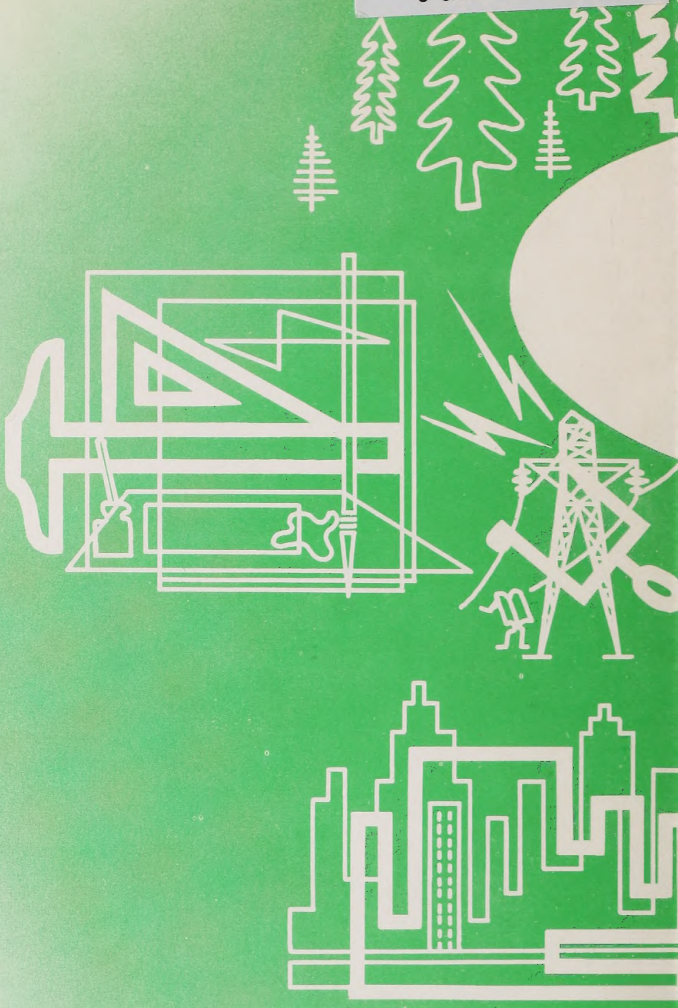
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